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Agenda item 7 (h)
Coordination, programme and other questions: calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields

Letter dated 8 July 2009 from the Chair of the Committee on Conferences to the President of the Economic and Social Council

In response to the invitation of the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1988/103, the Committee on Conferences met on 1 July to review the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings for 2010 and 2011 in the economic, social and related fields (E/2009/L.10) and welcomed the opportunity to provide, as appropriate, its recommendations thereon to the Council.

In introducing the provisional calendar, the Secretary of the Committee on Conferences drew the attention of the Committee to some important guidelines established by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in their resolutions and decisions on the calendar of conferences and meetings, which were also referred to in the preamble to the provisional calendar, specifically in paragraphs 1 (d) and 7 to 13. The Committee was informed that the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields for 2010 and 2011 comprised not only meetings of the Economic and Social Council, its functional commissions and expert bodies, but also meetings of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields as indicated in footnote c to the provisional calendar (E/2009/L.10, annex). In scheduling meetings, every effort was made to avoid, to the extent possible, any overlap of meetings related to the same sector of activity. The provisional calendar was formulated on the basis of the data received by the Secretariat at the time of its preparation. Information received subsequently will be included in the overall draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings, which would also take into account any decisions adopted by the Council at its substantive session in July 2009 when it considers the provisional calendar. Any proposals for a change of venue of a subsidiary body from its established headquarters will be reflected in the calendar only after approval by the respective Charter body.

The Committee on Conferences expressed concern about the capacity of the United Nations Office at Geneva to service several calendar sessions scheduled

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during the same time frame from 8 to 12 February and from 3 to 7 May 2010 in Geneva.

A question was also raised by the Committee as to when the modalities of the meetings referred to in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the preamble to the provisional calendar would be determined and why the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management did not state that costs for conference services for both meetings could be absorbed. The Committee welcomed the explanation provided by the representative of the Department that it was not certain when the modalities of the meetings would be decided and that the Department would do its best to service them without requesting additional resources, subject to the provisions outlined in paragraphs 11 and 12.

The Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings of the Council and its subsidiary organs for 2010 and 2011, bearing in mind the observations and issues raised above.

In closing, I would like to express the Committee's appreciation for the invitation of the Council to review its provisional calendar of conferences and meetings, and for the continued close cooperation between the Council and the Committee.

(*Signed*) Barbara **Kaudel**
Chair of the Committee on Conferences